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force, than has been occasioned hitherto by the extraordinary idea, that, to a *congeries* of nations, with a population of a hundred millions, possessing religions, languages, characters, and literatures of their own, moral and intellectual instruction is to be effectually communicated, only or chiefly through the English language, and the Roman character.

- 12.—*Letters descriptive of the Virginia Springs; and the Roads leading Thereto, and the Doings Thereat, &c.*
By PEREGRINE PROLIX. Philadelphia; H. S. Tanner.
1837. 12mo. pp. 248.

THIS writer excels in a light and airy descriptive style. His letters on Pennsylvania were agreeable and popular. This little volume is equally attractive, and gives more new information. The author describes, in a very lively manner, the scenery about the Virginia Springs, and the society and amusements found there. To most of us at the North, this is quite new. We had before some indistinct notion, that these springs in Virginia possessed real or supposed medicinal virtue, and that they were resorted to by travellers from the South and West; but the extent and excellence of the accommodations, the number of the springs, and the varied resources for the health of the body and the amusement of the mind, were, we fancy, less known to the majority of New Englanders, than the Brunnen of Nassau. We are, therefore, particularly indebted to this agreeable writer for showing us the abundant means of health and pleasure, so far as health and pleasure flow from annual visits to fashionable watering-places, which we have near at home. We may anticipate, that the Ancient Dominion will become in a few years the great resort of the gay and brilliant pleasure-hunters, as well as of the austere throng of dyspeptic gentlemen and nervous ladies; of those who know not what to do with themselves, and those who could not do it, if they did; of those who think that something is the matter with them, but are not aware that it is no matter what.

In noticing our author's former work, we said a word or two about his distressing puns. The habit has become more inveterate with him; and, as was to be anticipated, through the dire necessity of the case, the puns have become singly less endurable. To a writer of so much vivacity and real talent, much is to be forgiven, if he does stoop to unworthy ways. But such

conceits as “non in muddio tutissimus ibis” put the reader's friendship to the severest test.

13.—*A Discourse pronounced before the American Historical Society, &c.* By the Hon. LEVI WOODBURY. Washington ; Gales & Seaton. 8vo. pp. 67.

WE excuse ourselves from copying the enormous title-page of this Discourse. We have read it, however, and the Discourse behind it, notes and all. We would gladly go on and commend it, both for the love we bear to the American Historical Society, and our respect for the powers that be. But it is out of the question. As true men, we can do no such thing. Nor does the Secretary, we presume, learn first from us, that he by no means “stands alone,” in the regret expressed in the correspondence, prefixed to the Discourse, “that leisure has not been enjoyed to render it more worthy the kindness evinced by the Society.” A gentleman of his standing should have written a better address, or he should have written none, and allowed the Society to cater elsewhere. As to end or aim to it, the former may be found, though the search is long and weary ; the latter, we think, cannot be. All is haze and glorification. The matter is substantially a *rifacimento* of that of the Fourth of July orations of twenty years since. The sentences that body forth what of body it has, are long, disjointed, and involved, overlaid with inappropriate epithets and unmeaning metaphors ; and the style, on the whole, is infelicitous to that degree, that wherever the choice lay between a compact and tasteful expression, and a clumsy one, the latter would appear to have been scrupulously preferred. Moreover, the Secretary uses vain repetitions, as the school-boys do ; so that, take six of the orations mentioned above, and three Treasury Reports, and mix them till they froth, (it will not take long,) and the result might be just such a composition as this. It is certainly speaking within bounds to say, that all the meaning, which is here beaten out to cover more than three scores of pages, might be compressed into three pages, and those not over full of sense.

The last year's address before this Society was by Mr. Secretary Cass. It was learned, forcible, and finished. Compared to that work of a master, how “stale, flat, and unprofitable” is the rigmarole before us. We hope the American Historical Society is not deluded to suppose, that a man is of course a historian and a rhetorician, because he holds high station at the Federal head-